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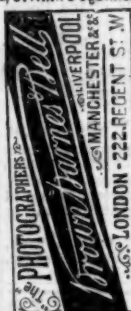
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EDINBURGH COURANT, Nov. 20, 1879.—This little annual is designed mainly for the class indicated in its title. It contains in a handy form a large amount of information useful for a number of different trades, and has besides some useful jottings on machinery.

ENGLISH MECHANIC, Nov. 21.—This is a new annual specially addressed to artisans, though from the nature of the contents it will probably have a very extended sale amongst the general public, for it contains information of a practical kind upon many subjects of interest. There is the usual calendar and almanac matter, and quite a number of useful recipes, besides articles selected from various sources.

HALIFAX COURIER, Nov. 22.—It is a useful sixpennyworth for all descriptions of working men. In addition to the usual calendar and general information looked for in almanacs, there is a mass of well-arranged information suited to the mechanic and general workman, including facts, calculating tables, receipts, inventions (with many illustrations), &c., &c.

SALFORD CHRONICLE, Nov. 22.—We have just received a copy of the "Artizan's Year Book and Engineer and Building Trades' Almanac for the year 1880," which is equal, both in quality and variety of matter, to any of its competitors. Besides an excellent almanac it gives a fund of interesting and useful information to persons of the artizan and mechanical class, for whose use it is specially intended.

MANCHESTER CITY NEWS, Dec. 13.—Messrs. Abel Heywood and Son have begun the issue of a yearly manual and almanac, especially addressed to artizans, engineers, and workmen in the building trades. It is a repository or miscellany of facts of all kinds. There are articles on mahogany stains, preserving skins, building stones, the incrustation of boilers, the use of water power in towns, mathematical instruments, machinery for connecting woodwork, and a hundred other subjects.

BRISTOL MERCURY, Nov. 24.—Chiefly intended for mechanics in the engineers' and building trades, for whom it provides a fund of instructive matter.

COLLIERY GUARDIAN, Nov. 21.—It contains eighty pages of useful and interesting matter, introduced by an able article from the pen of Mr. Abel Heywood, junr., entitled "A Slight Sketch of English-printed Almanacs." The book contains a well-prepared and full calendar, the ministry, eclipses, law terms, stamps, and a vast variety of information both ordinary and extraordinary; indeed, we should think everything which an artizan, engineer, or builder can require. We have little doubt that the venture will be a decided success.

BRIGHTON EXAMINER, Nov. 25.—A valuable contribution to artizans generally, and especially to those who are indicated in the title. The calendar and general useful information usually found in almanacs are preceded by an interesting sketch of the history of English-printed almanacs, and followed by a mass of brief but lucid contributions on subjects relating to science and art in many departments, tables of purchase and sale of property, for building clubs, diameters and circumferences, change wheels for screw cutting, &c., construction of frames, lathes, drills, the application and use of water-power in towns, photography, lithography, &c., and valuable hints on a hundred other subjects, compressed within the compass of a handy sixpenny volume.

EASTERN MORNING NEWS, Dec. 5.—This almanac contains much information of special value to all concerned in the engineering and building trades, including many calculations, tables, and receipts.

ASHTON REPORTER, Nov. 29.—This is a valuable compendium of information, and may well be called a *multum in parvo*. We shall not attempt to enumerate the many different items of scientific and technical instruction relating to almost all kinds of professions and trades, many of which are illustrated by diagrams, but we may safely assert that all classes of workmen and amateurs would find it useful as a book for frequent reference, at a merely nominal cost.

WIGAN OBSERVER, Nov. 16.—It is full of information of special use to workmen in the various trades mentioned, and cannot fail to have a wide circulation, the almanac supplying a want often complained of.

EDINBURGH DAILY REVIEW, Nov. 26.—This almanac contains a large collection of useful and interesting information suitable for all classes of artizans in the engineering and building trades, besides hints which inventors may probably read. The subjects upon which the editor and others have written are too numerous even to mention. The diagrams by which many of the subjects treated are illustrated are clearly printed and easily understood by the references in the various articles.

THE BAZAAR, Dec. 1.—A publication that deserves wide circulation among mechanics and workmen generally. The quantity of sound information and useful hints it contains is surprising.

ILLUSTRATED CARPENTER AND BUILDER, Dec. 5.—An excellent year book for the mechanic. The information given is well digested, and many of the short pieces of information on points in mechanical manipulation convey hints of great value to the workman. The longer articles are also characterised by a clearness and simplicity which will commend them to all artizans. The value of engineering and mechanical tables is also great.

PUBLIC OPINION, Nov. 29.—The Artizans' Year Book and Almanac, 1880, is full of information of the most varied and practical kind, and much of the valuable matter it contains is such as is not to be found elsewhere.

OLDHAM CHRONICLE, Nov. 29.—Is likely to have an extensive sale, not only locally, but throughout the country. It is an excellent protest against centralisation, and affords substantial evidence of what Manchester can do in the production of a thoroughly useful almanac for those interested in the engineering and building trades. Among the numerous woodcuts in the work is an artistic sketch of the birthplace of Crompton. In addition to a large amount of technical information, the work contains much that is useful to the general reader with reference to building clubs, life insurance, &c.

WESTERN MAIL (Cardiff), Dec. 5.—This book contains the memoranda on every-day subjects usually given in almanacs, and, in addition, a collection of short articles on industrial subjects. There are descriptions of hydraulic machines, printing presses, lathes, &c.; directions for calculating the weight and strength of building materials; and hints which cannot fail to be of use to artizans on a variety of other matters. The "Year Book," indeed, is one that may be taken up with profit by any intelligent person.

BUILDING NEWS, Nov. 21.—A well-selected compendium of useful information, likely to be of daily service to everybody in any way connected with construction or machinery. The matter has been gathered from reliable sources, and the compilers should receive sufficient encouragement to repeat their efforts in 1881.

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THE CITY JACKDAW:

A Humorous and Satirical Journal.

VOL. V.—No. 218.

MANCHESTER: FRIDAY, 16 JANUARY, 1880.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

AN ABRIDGMENT OF

"GREGSON'S FRAGMENTS OF LANCASHIRE."

XII.

THE story of the Dragon of Wantley is attributed to the family of More of More Hall, in the Hundred of West Derby. Dugdale observes in his *Story of Guy of Warwick*, that "it hath been so usual with our ancient historians, for the encouragement of after ages unto bold attempts, to set forth the exploits of worthy men with the highest encomiums imaginable . . . and, therefore, should we for that cause be so conceited as to explode it, all history of these times might as well be vitified." Though many such stories, no doubt, have been related, we shall here refer our readers to a similar one in the Harleian MSS. No. 2119, in the time of Thomas Venables, gentleman, living at Golborn, Cheshire.—"Hitt chancyd a terrible dragon to remayne and make his abode in the Lordshipp of Moston, in the county of Chester; where he devoured all such persons as he layd hold on. Which the said Venables hearinge tell of, cōsideringe the pittifull and dayly destruction of the people without recovery, following the example of the valiant Romaynes, and other worthy men, not regarding his own life in the comparison of the commodity and safeguard of his countrymen, did in his own person valiantly and courageously set on the said dragon. Where first he shott him throw with an arrow, and afterwards with other weapons manfully slew him; at which instant tyme the said dragon was devouring a child. For which worthy and valiant act was given him the Lordshipp of Moston, by the ancestors of the Earle of Oxford, lord of the Fee there. And also ever since, the said Thomas Venables and his heires in remembrance thereof have used to bear as well as in their arms as in their crest, a dragon." Which augmentation of a dragon on the arms, and a demi-dragon on the crest was confirmed to Sir Thomas Venables, knight, Baron of Kinderton, and his family by patent, 2nd November, 1560.

The Rev. Mr. Hunter, of Bath, in his history of Hallamshire and Sheffield, introduces the story of the Dragon of Wantley, and mentions the place where he was killed, but the knight there spoken of in rhyme, did not live at the place indicated, though he might have had a lodging "hard by" fair Rotheram. The More that killed the dragon was undoubtedly a highly-distinguished man; in fact, he was the More of More Hall, in Lancashire, who was famous for his gallantry, and had distinguished himself greatly at the battle of Poitiers, and whose ancestors had been residents in Lancashire for generations. Fuller, in his "Worthies of England," says that this Sir William de la More, "who was of Gloucestershire, proves to be a Lancashire man.

A man whose fame extended far
For arts of peace, and feats in Warr.

Indeed, he was no *carpet knight*, as he brought his honour with him out of Scotland on his sword's point, being knighted by King Edward the First for his no less fortunate than his valiant services therein; nor less was his fidelity to his son, Edward the Second, though unable to help him against his numerous enemies. But though he could not keep him from being deposed, he did him the service faithfully to write the manner of his deposition, being a rare manuscript, extant in Oxford Library. This worthy knight flourished in 1326."

This was, without doubt, the More of More Hall who is the hero of the ballad of the "Dragon of Wantley," and to whom Hercules was but an apprentice, for, as the ballad says—

"He had a club
His dragon to drub
Or he had ne'er done't I warrant ye;

* Fuller, vol 1, folio 384.

But More of More Hall
With nothing at all
He slew the Dragon of Wantley."

The description of the monster is tremendous—

"This dragon had two *furious* wings,
Each one upon each shoulder,
With a sting in his tail
As long as a flayl,
Which made him bolder and bolder.
He had long claws
And in his jaws
Four and forty teeth of iron,
With a hide as tough
As any *Buff*
Which did him round inviron.
"Have you not heard that the Trojan horse
Held seventy men in his belly?
This dragon was not quite so long,
But very near I'll tell ye."

And the dragon's achievements are thus summed up—

"Devour did he
Poor children three
That could not with him grapple;
And at one sup
He eat them up
As one should eat an apple.
"All sorts of cattle the dragon did eat,
Some say he'd eat up trees—
And that the forest sure he would
Devour up by degrees.
For houses and churches
Were to him gorse and buirches,
He eat all and left none behind;
But some stones, *dear Jack*,
Which he could not crack,
Which on the hills you will find."

The dragon's den is stated to have been within some "two or three miles, or thereabouts," from fair Rotheram, in Yorkshire, hard by "Matthew's house." Some conjecture the monster to be a witch, and others say he was the devil, for—

"From his nose
A smoke arose,
And with it burning snivel,
Which he cast off
When he did cough
In a well that he did stand by,
Which made it look
Just like a brook
Running with burning brandy."

The ballad then dwells upon the fact that a furious knight dwelt hard by, to whom the people, in their sore distress, apply for relief and protection from the dragon's inroads upon their property and requisitions upon their children—

"Men, women, girls and boys,
Sighing and sobbing,
Came to his *lodging*,
And made a hideous noyse—
Oh save us all,
More of More Hall,
Thou peerless knight of these woods;
Do but slay the dragon,
We won't leave a rag on,
Wee'll give thee all our goods."

But the valiant More tells them he needs none of their goods, but will undertake to fight their battle on very light conditions. He only requires, after the chivalrous fashion of the time—

BOTHAM'S WORM CAKES (Manufactured by Levenshulme.) are universally admitted to be the best and most palatable, and the only preparation to be relied on either for children or adults. 1d. each—7 for 6d.—and 1s. canisters—of all Chemists throughout the world.

"A fair maid of sixteen . . .
With a blush her cheeks adorning,
To 'point me o'er night,
Ere I go to fight,
And to dress (or arm) me in the morning."

He causes his armour to be spiked all round with Sheffield steel spikes,
five or six inches long, so that when armed

"You would have thought him for to be
An Egyptian porcu-pig."

Thus equipped, after drinking six pots of ale and a quart of *aqua vite*
to make him strong, More sallies out to the dragon's haunt, whilst the
people get upon trees and houses, churches and chimneys, to witness the
combat. Getting into the well, he cries "Boh!" when the dragon comes
to drink, and strikes him on the mouth with his fist, and then getting out
of the well, the fight begins

"With hand and with foot,
And so they went to 't,"

for two days and a night, without a wound being given on either side.
At length, after the dragon had hit the knight a mighty blow, in
turning about, exposes himself to an attack in the rear, and More of More
Hall gives him a tremendous kick in the breech. This happened to be
the only vulnerable spot in the monster's body, and he immediately gives
up the combat.

"Oh, quoth the dragon, with a sigh,
And turned six times together,
Sobbing and tearing,
Cursing and swearing,
Out of his throat of leather;

Oh thou rascal,
More of More Hall,
Would I had seen you never. . . .

"Murder, murder, the dragon ery'd,
Alack, alack, for grief,
Had you but mis't that place, you could
Have done me no mischief."

And the dragon dies in great agony. The ballad was published about 1679,
and is entitled "A true relation of the dreadful combat between More of
More Hall and the Dragon of Wantley." It is set to music in the original,
and the tune bears some resemblance to that of "Chevy Chase."

SKETCHES BY JINGO.

XXVI.—STORY OF A SHEEP'S HEAD.

THE other evening our village was thrown into a state of unusual
excitement. The mother of young Barker had purchased a sheep's
head from a butcher's in the village, but having a number of things
to carry had left it till she could send her boy for it. Away trudged
Barker, and having secured the head, disdained to have it covered up in
paper, but preferred to carry it under his arm, with the laudable intention
of showing his superiority over the other boys, by being able to flourish a
real sheep's head. Young Barker's way home led him past the canal.
Guess his astonishment when, as he neared the bridge, he saw upon the
ground a penknife, the blade of which was covered with blood. Of course,
our hero never dreamt of foul play; and so, with a grin of delight, he took
out his pocket-handkerchief and wiped the blood-stains from the knife.
Not caring to carry the pocket-handkerchief in its present bloody con-
dition, he threw it, as he thought, into the water, and went onward. Old
Smatcher chuckled with delight as he watched the slowly retreating form
of Barker, and prepared to carry out a little game which had suddenly
entered his brain. "Aw reckon aw'st ha' some fun to-neet—that aw shall.
It's toime those lads o'th' 'Doncin' Daymon' were made t' suffer—un
particularly young Barker, the dirty little beggar; his fayther a sowl-dier,
too; aw should ha' thought he'd a bin browt up different." Getting a large
armful of straw, Smatcher went into his solitary hut, and procuring
a cast-off suit of clothes, made a capital representation of the
nobler animal, man. This takes time to write much longer than
the accomplishment of Smatcher's design. Throwing the dismal-
looking object into the canal, Smatcher gave it a few duckings, and
after fastening it securely to the canal bank ran howling into the village
with the intelligence that a man was in the water. As Smatcher lived
near the canal, it, of course, never entered into the minds of the fast-
gathering multitude that he could be guilty of playing a hoax upon them.
Soon, however, a large concourse of people were assembled upon the canal
bank, one suggesting one thing, and one another, but none venturing to

drag the body out of the water. Soon a shout of "Here comes Smatcher;
he'll get it eant," arose, and, by a common impulse, the people made way
for him, in order that he might get to the water's edge. The supposed
body had drifted into the centre of the canal, so that Smatcher, though
against his will—he never calculating upon the event of the body moving
from its original position—plunged into the canal, and amid the plaudits
of an admiring crowd grasped the apparently-drowned man firmly under
one arm, whilst with the other he swam gallantly for the bank, feeling
scarcely as happy as he had at first expected. No sooner did he reach
terra firma in safety than his native cunning came to his aid, and, assuming
a strangely mysterious aspect he said, "Why, bless my soul an' body, if
the drownded man hasn't lost his yed!" Like a gaping crowd around
the *Police News*, each person strove to get a sight of the corpse; and so
great became the crush that an old woman said she was nearly walking
home a corpse, owing to the excessive crushing she got on that eventful
occasion. Like the fiend he was, Smatcher softly whispered into the too
willing ear of an old man, named Brandon—a dapper little fellow, who
sporting a Napoleon moustache, "Aye; un aw think aw con point
to the chap who has done th' murder!" Theau doesn't say so!" replied
the astonished Brandon. "Yoi, oi do," continued Smatcher, "un aw'll
tell thi whoa it is." Bending close to the listening Brandon, he said:
"It's yung Harry Barker, Sam. Aw seed him gooin deawn just neaw
with this poor mon's yed undher his arm; aw did, us sure us awm a livin'
sinner, Sam." "Theau never says so," said the dismayed Brandon.
"Another thing," continued the wily old Smatcher, "aw've fun a pocket-
hankicher wi' yung Barker's name on't; so nt awm sure he's th'
murderer." Ere long, the startling news was conveyed from mouth to
mouth. Some thought that it was the body of Smiler, and there can be
no question that this impression would have been universally adopted had
he not put in an appearance at this opportune time. Old Tranche, the
constable, came rushing down to the spot, followed by one or two more
of his calibre. Suddenly, a wild shout rent the air. Some person
zealous in the cause of justice, had caught the suspected murderer, and
although the captor had that day received the sum of sixpence as a loan
from poor Barker, and they had sworn eternal friendship ere they parted,
the said captor dragged Barker to the canal bank amid the fierce cries of
an angry multitude. "This is the chap, kunstable," said one, "and lorjus
days, if he hasn't gotten the murdered man's yed in his hond!" Full of
astonishment, Barker dropped the head, and so eager was Smacker, of the
High Flyer, to get a close inspection of this most important part of the
human frame, that he was thus enabled to see more clearly than the
others what it really was. "Why, gentlemen," yelled he, pointing to the
triangular-shaped object on the ground, "this is a sheep's head, and
Barker is not to blame, after all." "Un look here," said Smatcher, smiling
all round, "th' drownded man isn't a chap at o, but a bundle o' cloas
filled wi' straw!" Some of the people were for throwing Smatcher into
the water, believing him to be the real instigator (as, indeed, he was) of
the hoax; and the strange fact that the sheep's head was not sooner
detected may be accounted for by the darkness of the night, which,
naturally, prevented any person from seeing it distinctly, unless in close
contiguity to it. Barker, you may be sure, was in a terrible fright, and
he carefully avoided the canal bank after nightfall. It only remains for
us to say that the knife found by Barker had been dropped by some
person or persons unknown to our hero, who had, apparently, cut them-
selves and then threw away the knife in a fit of angry disgust.

READINESS.

THACKERAY, in a delightful chapter, gives the account of his own
powers as a master of *repatee*. He has thought—he says—of so
many good answers to make to all sorts of comments and criticisms,
but he has invariably thought of them the next day. Most of the novelist's
readers will resemble him in this little incident, and will realise that the
best *impromptu's* are those which are best considered, and that readiness
is even a rarer quality than wit. For it is curious how often general
conduct will get praise, when all that has been praiseworthy about it has
been its immediateness. When we say a man is a good after-dinner
speaker, half our time we only mean that he can think on his legs, and
can string his sentences glibly without either much hesitation or much
method. The chances are that he is by no means a good speaker, and
that all he possesses is the gift of the readiness. It is a rare gift, and is
often enjoyed by those who have very little to employ it upon.

And yet ready men are generally witty men, and they are almost always

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talkative men. What Lord Bacon said two hundred years ago has never been contradicted. Reading makes a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man, and, accordingly, the nations that are most talkative are those that have most wit and most readiness. The Celtic race possesses it in great preponderance over the Teuton. A Frenchman is unapproached at a *bon mot*, and a German can scarcely understand one. But the gift of readiness, though generally found with wit, is quite independent of the capability of humour. We count Lamb and Thackeray amongst the foremost of our humourists; but poor Elia, though matchless in the saying of good things, could rarely get them out fast, and Thackeray himself says that he thought of his own generally when he was in bed. With all his taste for society, he could never make a good after-dinner speech, and often envied Dickens his rare and valuable facility. And yet he did in his life say some very good things. When he paid his first visit to America it was known of him that he was very fond of oysters, and, at a dinner given in his honour, the largest oyster that the place provided—quite an abnormal oyster, in point of size—was placed before him. He said himself that he turned pale when he saw it, but that he ate it in silence. His host asked him how he felt after. "Profoundly thankful," said Thackeray; "I feel as if I had swallowed a baby."

The rarest recorded instance of readiness was undoubtedly that of Foote the comedian. He had given offence to a famous duellist of the day, who had vowed vengeance, and was only waiting to meet the luckless actor. Foote was told of it and kept out of his way for a long time. At last they met at an inn where the actor generally dined, and where the duellist happened quite casually to come in. Foote saw his danger when it was too late; but, as his enemy said nothing, did his best to entertain him and keep him in good humour. No one could be more diverting when he chose, and here he was not only very anxious but very successful. He told one story after another. He kept the table in a roar. The fire-eater became quite pacific, and was delighted with his new friend. Foote passed from one good story to another, and at last took to imitating different people, a practice for which he had extraordinary facility. The other guests got quite uproarious with the fun, when suddenly the luckless actor saw from the face of his enemy that he had inadvertently imitated one of his friends. The duellist was, in fact, putting his hand in his pocket to pull out a card and present it as the preliminary to a challenge, when he turned round to the mimic and said in a dry satiric voice, "Really, Mr. Foote, you are so uncommonly clever in taking other people off, I wonder whether you could take yourself off." "Oh, certainly," said Foote, and he walked straightway into the street. Here his readiness, probably, saved him his life.

It is noticeable how the characters of mind and body correspond, and how the ready man is generally quick in his movements, prompt in action, and fertile in resource. The great Napoleon used to say that no quality was so rare or so valuable as (what he called) two-o'clock-in-the-morning courage. The power of suddenly changing front and altering the whole scheme of a campaign was precisely what the greatest of all modern strategists would admire. He himself eminently possessed it. The man who had the wit to say to the aristocrat who taunted him with the lack of ancestry, "*Moi, je suis ancêtre*," possessed a readiness of words as well as of action. He was not likely to lose either his head or his tongue. But this kind of promptitude is rarely coupled with staying power. It is distinctly meteoric, and part of the brilliancy is due to the gloom which follows it. And, therefore, the nations who most possess it are also purposeless, and without reserve of force. We all know of our own countrymen that in a campaign they are generally worsted at first and victorious at last. When we say that an Englishman never knows when he is beaten, it really amounts to this—that he is invariably beaten often before he ultimately wins. The quality of "dash" is not the bull-dog quality of "Hold fast and tear 'em." One very amusing instance of military readiness is given in "Napier's Memoirs." The troops were defiling down a narrow gorge in India, when suddenly a mad bull was seen charging down at full swing, and with tremendous impetus. The captain had presence of mind enough to give the word of command, which the soldiers mechanically followed. The order he gave sounded singular enough. It was this—"Prepare to receive cavalry." The soldiers obeyed, and the unfortunate bull was impaled on their bayonets. This episode has always been cited as an instance of the courage of the British soldiery. It seems rather to illustrate the courage of the Indian bull.

The quality belongs also to certain professions. With military men it is absolutely essential. But an advocate cannot be great without it. It is better than eloquence, and is that quality which makes the barrister

win his client's case often by holding his tongue. A man with less readiness might be an eloquent bungler. The possession of it has been of rare advantage to Lord Beaconsfield, and has directed him into the channels of political success; while the want of it has left abler men at the foot of ladder.—*Mayfair*.

PICKINGS FROM THE "TOWN CRIER."

MORAL REFLECTIONS.

[BY DIOGENES BROWN, ESQUIRE, TUD INN.]

ON SLEEP.—Sleep is the art of lying and forgetting oneself. Many people, however, both lie and forget themselves without going to sleep—this is curious. If we never awoke we should never know we had been to sleep, and if we never went to sleep how could we wake. This problem requires further consideration. Some folks can't sleep without "Nap" before they go to bed. Others can't sleep without a nightcap. This is rum.

ON CATS.—It is best only to have one cat, but in most cases there's a "purr." Cats are of two kinds. There's the cat-o'-nine-lives and the cat-o'-nine-tails. Most people prefer the former. The tastes of cats are various and versatile. Cats are thieving beasts, but it is there nature to. They can only live according to their "lights."

ON NEWSPAPERS.—Newspapers generally consist of a good deal more paper than news. This is as well. You can sell the paper when it is old, but you can't sell the news. The first principle of a paper is to make it pay, and the second is to make it pay more. On these two hang all the loss and the profits. Newspapers are hard to manage, by gum; but gum and scissors are very useful. Newspapering would be a pleasant and profitable business, only there's writers' and printers' wages to be thought of, and the devil to pay every Saturday night.

ON HANSOM CABS.—Hansom cabs are remarkable for external beauty and for the fiery spirit their horses do not have, and their drivers do—when they can get it. Cabs have two wheels, excepting when one comes off, in which case the number is reduced. Cabmen are great orators, and if you want to know what the English language is capable of, take a cab from Stephenson Place to the Plough and Harrow, and offer the driver eightpence.

ON PICTURES.—Pictures were invented to keep idle, tobacco-smoking, and turpentine-drinking fellows, called "artists," out of mischief. They spoil good wall papers, but, otherwise, don't do much damage.

ON BOOTS.—All boots are made to last, but few of 'em do. Between boots and blasphemy there is a close and subtle connection. Boot-makers produce tight boots, tight boots produce corns, corns (when jumped on) produce bad language.

OUTSIDE THE OLD HALL DOOR.

I STOOD outside the homestead door,
And thrilled with expectation sweet;
"I soon shall see her face once more—
Another minute we shall meet."

I knew the welcome waiting there,
Yet paused, as if to realise
The pictured dream, so sweet, so fair—
The sudden joy, the glad surprise!

My darling heard my steps without,
Her every sense was on the watch,
She heard me pause, as if in doubt—
She heard the lifting of the latch,

And flew to meet me—oh, the kiss!
The olden welcome—ever new!
Oh, surely it is life's best bliss
When two hearts meet so fond and true.

Whalley Range.

K. T.

A LETTER was received at the Newark (New Jersey) post-office a few days ago bearing the following address:—"bos at te tepo." After prolonged and laborious efforts on the part of the clerks to get at a translation, it was handed over to the station agent of the New Jersey Railroad.

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CURRENT AMUSEMENTS.

Theatre Royal.—Pantomime—*Dick Whittington and His Cat*.
 Prince's Theatre.—Pantomime—*The Forty Thieves*.
 Queen's Theatre.—Pantomime—*Old Mother Goose*.
 The Folly Theatre of Varieties.—Extra Attractions.
 The Gaiety.—Variety Entertainment. Extra Attractions.
 Cooke's Circus, Chepstow Street.—*Cinderella*.
 Keith's Circus, Quay Street.—*Lord Mayor's Show*.
 Free Trade Hall.—Messrs. Poole and Young's Diorama.
 Saturday.—Mr. De Jong's Concert.
 Whaite's, Bridge Street.—German Fair.
 Belle Vue.—Zoological Gardens.

CAWS OF THE WEEK.

WE bought a telephone, and had it established between our office and our domestic mansion, and were delighted to be able to exchange sweet sentences with the chosen of our heart at a distance. One day, Jones called upon us for that little account; we were suffering under a depression of funds, so, instead of paying him, we invited him to dinner, sending the welcome intelligence to our beloved in the usual manner. Beckoning Jones to the instrument in order to let him share our pleasure in the reply, we were electrified to hear the telephone ring out:—"What do you invite that beast here for, when you know I hate him?" Jones declined the invitation, and next day we were served with a writ. Anybody may have our telephone at half-price.

WE heartily congratulate our worthy Bishop upon the event of yesterday, and hope that he will find the rosy chain a pleasant fetter, and that a dual work of Christian philanthropy will long continue to invite blessings upon the union.

A NEW cry for the Afghans—"Vive l'Angleterre."

ONE of our most noted tragedians, in a page advertisement, says, "In England, Ireland, Scotland, America, Australia, &c., I am pronounced, by the press and the public, the unrivalled, world-famous, and great Shakesperian actor of the age." The unassuming modesty of this announcement is only surpassed by the announcement of another tragedian, some years ago, that he had just returned from a successful tour of the universe! Verily, this is an age of egotism.

IRELAND—the land of erring.

IF the German government, in the concentration of Russian troops on their Eastern frontier, a new *War saw*, it would be their best plan to stir up the dish with a stout *Pole*.

GABRIELDI is a most inveterate revolutioniser of States. He has altered the state of Naples and Sicily, he has divorced the States of the Church, and now he has gone in for a reform in the Matrimonial state; he has divorced his wife—what will he do next?

GREAT Conservative Victory! They have unseated Mr. T. E. Stephens from the Liverpool Town Council, on petition; but they haven't got the seat yet.

THE two most notorious men of the day—The Earl of Beaconsfield and the Harpurhey assassin. One is known, but, unfortunately, the other is not.

MR. PARNELL's name ought to be Richard Murphy, at least, one section of the Irish people seem to think so, for they have metamorphosed him into their *Dick tatur*.

HIS ideal emblem of Ireland appears to be holding one hand out for relief and waving in the other a firebrand; motto, charity, or *I burn ye*.

DR. ROYLE, in one of his impassioned perorations, delivered on Saturday last at Harpurhey, said that he was now in Afghanistan, and that he would stay there. We devoutly hope the learned gentleman's imaginations may be completely fulfilled. The residence of a member of the Roy(a)le family in India would be an unmixed benefit, blessing those who give and those who take. Some of the natives of India might even suppose that Dr. Royle was the Queen.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON on Wednesday night, speaking at Edinburgh, said that the good which was done by the Conservative Government must not be measured by what they had achieved, but by what they stopped. We cordially agree with him. They have stopped our industry, they have stopped the world's confidence in us, they have stopped our credit as a just and honourable nation, they have stopped the progress of financial reform, they have stopped the breath of a few thousands of Afghans and Zulus, they have stopped—too long in office, and it is time they were stopped altogether. As to their achievements, we cannot measure a non-entify; they have achieved—nothing!

THE bridges by which the current of public opinion is overcome—Sir Brydges Henniker.

THEY could not refuse the appointment, they had a deal too much *Manners*.

THE great Silver Question, our P.D. says, is how to get hold of it. As to its value he says a half-crown has been always worth two-and-six ever since he was a boy!

WE could have believed that the Government were actuated, in the Co-operation movement, by a strict sense of justice, had the thing taken place a year or two ago; but on the eve of a general election it looks too much like "gag," and reads like a bid for the votes of the shopkeepers.

SHAKESPERIAN motto for General Roberts—"Hang no more in doubt."

ENGLAND's guiding star at present is *Star-vation*!

WE know of a sporting character who said once at a race meeting that marriage was only an insane desire to pay for a woman's board and lodging

A BRUTAL wish—W(h)ither away.

OUR readers can bear us witness that we are not partial to puns; that we are rarely guilty of them; and those who know us personally are aware that our folks will not visit the family of the punster. Here is a pun, however, so much more dreadful than its fellows, that we reproduce it through sheer helplessness. He asked us what is the difference between a good looking glass and a good looking lass? We gave it up immediately, which is invariably the safest way. Then he said: "One is a mirror and the other is a mere she." We have subsequently been informed by his family that the play was on the government of verbs.

BITTEN.—The *Danbury News* says:—"Mr. C. J. Deming purchased a bull dog of Gardner, the up-town butcher, and took it up to White's shop. It soon manifested its disposition by biting a son of Michael Fox through the foot. This led Mr. Deming to give it away. Fred Magersuppe became the owner, and he took it upstairs to his room to wait till he went home at night. Fred patted it on the head to reconcile it to its change of ownership, and the dog responded by planting his teeth so firmly through Fred's hand as to require his jaws to be prised open to release him. Then a man named Lockwood came around to tame him, and the dog grabbed him by the hand, drawing blood. This becoming monotonous, Mr. Deming took the dog out and shot him.

THE CORONER AND THE GUARDIANS.

IT is painful to observe the fact that the coroner, that very honourable authority of our childhood, should have become so contemptible in the eyes of any portion of Her Majesty's subjects as our city coroner has in the eyes of both the city councillors and the board of guardians. Doubtless much of the feeling existing towards the coroner is engendered by that gentleman's pugnacious temperament. But this much must be conceded by all men, that whilst the office remains amongst us as a national institution, the person fulfilling those duties ought to have respectful courtesy paid to his monitions. Further, we ought to remember that his duties are such as often lead gentlemen into positions of embarrassment and difficulty, and often of seeming harshness, so that the means of forming an estimate of the character and capacity of the city coroner, are rarer than those of almost any other officer known to the public. Again, his duties call him to overhaul the regulations of workshops, places of entertainment, and, more or less, all the relations of man to man, employer and employed, the rich and the poor, the noble in his castle, and the hedges in his cabin. No house is safe from his visits, and no British subject free from his control. This legal omnipotence, and Argus-eyed authority, has ever had less of the state, panoply, and legal millinery about him than even the common attorney, whilst the terrible six-and-eightpence tax so ruthlessly levied upon every man who looks into the attorney's den is quite unknown to the coroner's court. His very cheapness, and homeliness, has tended to reduce his importance in the eyes of town clerks and boards of guardians, and hence among the people. Very likely the coroner is not the practically important personage he once was, from the fact that we have now a police system, and police magistrates, in every district of moderate dimensions, and thus we have quick machinery ready for any emergency which may arise, which was unknown at the time when honest Dogberry attended the "Crown's Court." Whilst these facts have quietly come to the front in all crucial cases, and thus diminished the coroner's usefulness and necessity, it is very doubtful if the time is quite ripe for his abolition. We are to estimate his differences from the police magistrate by marking his differences in the mode of procedure. As to the police-court procedure, though professedly representing themselves as carrying out a code of laws based upon the assumption of a prisoner's innocence, and professedly throwing the proof of guilt upon the prosecution, yet such has become the practice of the police, that a system of terrorism, almost, has arisen, and a prisoner is proceeded against much as a victim dedicated to destruction, and is compelled to fight, almost unaided and alone, the terrible powers of the police with the public purse in their hands. But whilst this official depreciation of the coroner's importance has been taking place, the actual benefits arising from his existence were never greater than now. Not tied hand and foot to crude forms of procedure, or hampered by official tape, attached to the cell doors, the coroner is discursive in his inquiries, and his decisions receive far more of the assent of his auditors, than do the decisions of any police magistrate whatsoever. Another title to respect consists in the absence of that official swearing which is the bane of the police force. The coroner's verdict embodies the story told by the neighbours and friends of those poor travellers who have "gone to that bourne from whence no traveller returns," so that evidence, being given upon oath, and whilst the witnesses are under the serious effects of a recent tragic circumstance, often carries with it more of reliability and truthfulness than commonly attaches to proceedings in the police courts. But it is when in conflict with local authority, such as the town council or board of guardians, that the modern coroner is "sat" upon, and pronounced a fussy nonentity. These reflections have been forced upon us by the report of last week's sitting of the Guardians of Manchester. A letter from the City Coroner was read, setting forth the verdict of a jury which had held an inquest upon a child who had died of convulsions, said to have been caused by the starved condition of its body. The evidence disclosed the fact that the parents of the child, a Mr. and Mrs. Wells, were poor people who had lived with their three children for fifteen months on an income of eight shillings per week earned by the mother, the father being a scrivener out of work the whole time. The finding of the coroner's jury was that the child had died from natural causes, accelerated by insufficient nourishment, and that the scale of relief given by the guardians was too low. Now the man Wells had not applied to the guardians until nine days prior to the decease of his child, for what reason did not appear, but doubtless both the coroner himself and his jury thought the underlying reason of the man's conduct was one of extreme

reluctance to go through the painful ordeal incident to such an application. Hence the addenda which appears as a sort of after-thought to the inquiry into the causes of the child's death. The reading up of the coroner's letter at the guardian's meeting was the occasion of the contemptuous remarks before referred to, and it must be regretted that in this case the zeal of both the coroner and his jury on behalf of the poor has led them into an indiscretion. The board of guardians has so frequently been plucked by the coroner for conduct towards the destitute which has ended in suicide and death by hardship in one form or another, on an occasion like the present it was the easiest possible slip for the coroner to believe this only another death caused by the harshness of the workhouse regulations, but as he was in error the guardians snubbed him.

The public are so greatly interested in supporting the power and dignity of the coroner, that we cannot afford to allow an incident like this conduct of the guardians to pass without reprobation. The bench, the bar, the guardians, and the common councils of our towns seem arrayed as one man against the coroners and their courts. The police never surrender a prisoner for examination before a coroner, nor do the judges try a prisoner on a coroner's commitment, and these are both grievances with coroners. Still their power is neither small nor unimportant, and when exercised by a gentleman of Mr. Herford's acumen, the man or men who carry a small advantage to the length of treating him with superciliousness, really smite themselves both hip and thigh. The coroner's inquiry is just as superior to that of the police as any inquiry conducted by a learned man may ever be over that conducted by a policeman who till lately followed the plough.

A RAILWAY GUARD'S STORY.

I HAD been guard of the down Manchester mail for several years, when an incident occurred which made a break in the routine of my duties, consisting then, as now, of working a train from London to Manchester and back the same day. On the occasion to which I refer, my train had arrived to time at the city of P—, about two hours' journey from London, at which point five minutes' delay was allowed. As the train was running light, I was the only guard in charge, and the parcels, luggage, &c., in the van being all squared and put to rights, I had a couple of minutes to spare to look about the platform. My attention was attracted to the unusual circumstance of the parcel clerk and station master, accompanied by a coachman in livery making their way to the van. The station-master carefully carried a square box, strongly secured, which he placed in my hand, saying, "This box you must deliver personally to the parcel-clerk at London, immediately on arrival. You will find official instructions in the letter which I now give you." Time being up, the station-master gave the signal, and we glided from the platform.

I put the box on the window-desk, and the weather being warm, removed my coat, also my cap, and stood at the wheel until we were fairly on our way. Turning to the letter I found the box and contents fully described. It seems Lady —, then in London, had been on a visit to the city of P—, taking her jewels at the same time, but, in returning to town, had left them behind, and as the jewels were particularly required for that evening, her ladyship had telegraphed that they were to be sent to the parcel office at London, and there given up to her accredited servant. It seemed to me a rather unusual course to recover such valuable property, one would have thought it desirable to send a messenger purposely for it. However, it was no affair of mine, my duty lay clearly before me, I had to deliver the box at the London parcel office, and this I determined to do. The train had, by this time, considerably slowed, owing to a heavy gradient, and I was in the act of looking at my watch to see if we were keeping to time, when I received a blow from behind, and all became blank. When I recovered consciousness, I found myself on my back, with my legs and arms secured by ropes, and Jim Brown, a guard who had, three months before, been dismissed, pouring brandy down my throat.

"Ha, ha! my hearty, coming round, are you? Not unlikely, after such good stuff as this; really good," he gasps, between copious drinks.

Yes, there he was, Jim Brown, with my coat and hat on, standing at the wheel, working the train, and, where possible, saluting the pointmen as he passed. I saw it plainly; with his known agility and dexterity, he had jumped on the footboard of the van as we were ascending the incline, unlocked the door, and surprised me from behind. And his object? To steal the jewels? Not if I knew it—the confidence reposed in me had never yet been betrayed. But I was bound, securely tethered, as my utmost struggles only served to testify; the case seemed hopeless.

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is the best. May be had from Burgon & Co.; Woolley's; Auty & Firth; Woodhead & Son; Holgate & Co.; N. Gould & Co.; Bealey & Gardner; Lamb & Holmes; Cadman; Leak; Smallman; Woodroffe, and all Grocers. MAKERS—BROOK & CO., 79, MANOY STREET, MANCHESTER.

"Jim?"

"Well, old pal."

"What's the meaning of this?"

"Well, you see, your jolly friend Jim Brown having got the sack three months ago, and been out of collar and out of luck ever since, is getting a trifle short of the 'ready' of the wherewithal, and as his rich uncle refuses to die, he, Jim Brown, having heard (never mind how) of these pretty diamonds going to town in your charge, thought he might as well relieve you of them, and relieve himself at the same time. Ha, ha!"

"But, Jim, you won't turn thief, and you won't disgrace an old chum like me?"

"I'm very sorry to say I must do both, and here's your health old boy. But no harm will come to you; it's the box I want, and have it I will."

Nothing further was said, for what seemed to me an hour or more. I could tell by the glimpses I got now and then of the country our whereabouts, and felt sure on reaching the heavy incline at W—— he would bolt. And so it proved; as we were approaching the incline, Jim threw off my coat and hat and donned his own, seized the box with his right arm, and with his left cut asunder the ropes which bound my arms, dropping the knife as he did so.

"Ta, ta, old pal!" and, quickly bursting the door, vanished. It was the work of a moment to sever the bonds which secured my feet, and to spring to the wheel. Looking back I saw the jewel box flying into a hedge, and Jim lying helpless on the ground. I quickly gave the driver the signal to stop, and hastening to the engine briefly explained matters. Accompanied by the stoker, whom I sent to the rear of the train with a red flag, I found poor Jim groaning terribly, and apparently unable to move.

"I am sorry for you, Jim, but it is your own fault. I cannot stay with you, but I will send assistance from the next station. So saying, I secured the box, which looked none the worse, and calling up the stoker we hastened to our places, and after stopping at the first station to give orders for Jim's removal, rattled merrily away to the metropolis.

My first duty on arrival was to take the jewel box to the parcel office, where I met a liveried servant of Lady—— in waiting. I deemed it advisable to have a private interview with the chief of the parcel department, who decided that, under the circumstances—and as my day's work was done—we had better see the box safely to its destination. Entering the carriage in waiting, a drive of half-an-hour brought us to her ladyship's residence. I need scarcely say that much interest was excited by the narrative I had to tell. I was complimented by her ladyship, and presented with a ten pound note. The affair never got into the papers, and was known only to a few persons.

Jim Brown managed to escape after all. He was not found when search was made; and how, in his crippled condition, he managed to get away is a mystery. I lost sight of him for some years, and only heard the other day that he had been working a train for some time on one of the Welsh lines, with credit to himself and satisfaction to his employers, when his career was brought to a close by an attack of bronchitis, which ended fatally.

I am still working the Manchester down mail, and when I pass the spot where the flying leap took place, I often think of Jim Brown and the jewel casket.

A. T.

WILLIAM HEPWORTH DIXON.

EVEN under circumstances most favourable to the preservation of its several forces, the life of a London journal is spent lavishly and renewed quickly. The gentle intellectual excitements of literary ease are conducive to longevity, but the severe strain of incessant literary toil exhausts the strongest nerves and shortens the worker's days. With a single exception, William Hepworth Dixon survived all the men of letters with whom he was most closely associated during the sixteen years of his editorial control of this journal. De Morgan, John Bruce, Doran, Chorley, Thornbury, all went before him to the undiscovered country; and when he dropped suddenly last Saturday morning he had attained what is old age to journalists, though he was still in life's middle term, and to the last was remarkable for his show of physical elasticity and youthfulness.

Born in 1821, at Great Ancoats, near Manchester, and reared under circumstances that denied him the education of a public school and university, Hepworth Dixon began his career under disadvantages that only sharpened his resolve and quickened his courage. By those who watched his doings critically it was sometimes questioned whether he

would have gained more than he would have lost by a careful preliminary training, and probably academic discipline would have diminished the superb fearlessness to which he was indebted scarcely less than to mental subtlety and address for his eminence and his triumphs in successive controversies. Anyhow, the difficulties from which he suffered throughout a remarkable career did not prevent him from forcing his way at an early age to influence, or from maintaining to the last a conspicuous place amongst contemporary writers. After serving an apprenticeship to his future calling at Cheltenham—where he for some time acted as literary editor of a local newspaper, whilst contributing articles to Douglas Jerrold's *Shilling Magazine* the *Illuminated Magazine*, and other periodicals—Dixon was still in his twenty-sixth year when he brought his young wife and eldest child to London, where he soon found enough work for his immediate necessities. Living for some years in Douglas Jerrold's set, and receiving from the popular humourist friendly encouragement and assistance, which he never ceased to remember with affectionate gratitude, the young journalist associated himself with the *Daily News*, for which journal he produced a series of articles on the "Literature of the Lower Orders," and another even more remarkable set of papers on "London Prisons." This latter group of social studies were, soon after their appearance in the paper, worked up into the volume that, published in 1850, may be regarded as the earliest of the many separate works by the author, who for the next twenty-nine years was scarcely less prolific of books appearing under his name than of contributions to journalism. Having gained his footing on the *Athenaeum* before the publication of "London Prisons," he improved it whilst gathering the materials of his successive memoirs of John Howard, William Penn, and Robert Blake, a series of personal memoirs that gave him a firm hold of the many readers who prefer biography to every other kind of literature. During the first seven years (1853-1860) of his editorship he found his principal occupation, apart from his official duties, in the systematic study of the State archives, from which he brought together a large amount of data for a grand historical project that he was induced to relinquish for the execution of enterprises more easy of accomplishment and more certain of reward. The later half of his editorial career was, however, fruitful of some of his best and most popular books—the "Personal History of Lord Bacon," which unquestionably succeeded in changing the general estimate of the philosophic Lord Chancellor; the "Holy Land," which remains the favourite handbook of ordinary tourists to Palestine; and the "New America," which was emphatically the book of its particular season, and would have remained a subject for unqualified congratulation had not its extraordinary success induced the author to follow it up with the hasty book that was the only notable mistake of a long course of authorship. With respect to this indiscreet sequel, made up of just those notes which the writer's soberer judgment determined him to omit from the earlier work, it is enough to say that, to those who knew the purity of his life, it seemed no less grotesque than painful that such a man should find himself under the necessity of vindicating himself in a court of law from imputations of immoral purpose.

Hepworth Dixon's retirement from the *Athenaeum* followed soon after the publication of the works that may be styled the immediate and most important fruits of his first American trip, which was also fruitful in the well-known recovery of the Irish State Papers, that had been so long and strangely lost. But on escaping from routine duties the liberated editor had no design of living less laborious days. On the contrary, his projects required all his powers for their accomplishment, and the ten succeeding years were the busiest of his life. Beginning with "Free Russia," and closing with the third and fourth volumes (left in uncorrected proofs) of "Royal Windsor," no less than twenty-five volumes of history, travel, and fiction proceeded in this closing period of his story from the author's unrelenting pen. But this mass of work affords no adequate record of the exertions and achievements of an author who during the same period threw off a steady series of anonymous contributions to magazines and newspapers, and was a frequent speaker from public platforms. Account should also be taken of his practice of running about the world for the gratification of a strong natural love of travel, or for the acquisition of the special knowledge required by his literary undertakings. He found also a characteristic delight in squandering his superfluous strength on matters that could neither enlarge his fame nor put an additional guinea in his pocket. Apart from his literature, he did at every stage of his career an amount of work that would have entitled him to rank with men of vigour had he never written a book or an article. The zeal which enabled him in a few months to organise one hundred of the three hundred local com-

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mittees for the great Exhibition of 1851 was no inconsiderable element of the combination of forces that resulted in a great success. Had he received a school inspector's salary for his services to popular education he would not have been overpaid for the time and trouble he expended on the business of the London School Board during the first three years of its existence. The same may be said of the fervour with which he threw himself into the pottering work of an unpaid justice of the peace for Middlesex. From the patience and care that he lavished on the business of the Palestine Exploration Fund, it might have been imagined that he had no urgent private affairs. He was at everybody's call to be chairman at a public dinner, a parish meeting, or the annual assembly of a mechanics' institute; and when he had on hand only a fair allowance of work for three men of average energy, he would amuse himself by organising an association in honour of Shakspeare, or taking crowds of workmen through the Tower of London on public holidays.

If we had to express in a word the most distinguishing characteristic of this energetic worker we should say "manliness." He had his failings, but he was *always manly*, in the brightest and bravest sense of the word. If he was deficient in tact, he was faultless in temper. He never failed to protest against the injustice of any remarks he might hear at dinner-table or in smoking-room to the disparagement of an absent acquaintance. His view of a comrade's character and work often erred from excess of generosity, never from want of it. When his friends were in trouble he always knew how to speak the right words of comfort, and long after a trouble had passed he could show with nicest delicacy his sympathetic mindfulness of the old grief. It was part of his manliness to be the keeper of his own troubles, and hold them bravely from the world's notice. He never talked melo-dramatically of his early struggles. On the morrow of a reverse he went about as cheerily as though it were the day after victory. In his latter years misfortunes came thick upon him, but he endured them all without complaint. When his eldest daughter, the best beloved of all his children, died, his mere acquaintances suspected him of insensibility because he disdained to wear his sorrow on his sleeve. Had he possessed a thousand a year from land he could not have seemed more indifferent to the disaster that deprived him of nearly all his careful savings, which he had invested in Turkish stock, with an unaccountable confidence in a hopelessly bankrupt and failing State. The explosion that scattered and almost destroyed his house near the Regent's Park canal did not ruffle his temper nor depress him for a single instant. He did his best to show the same fortitude under the blow that, falling upon him when he had been for some time getting out of health, was too much even for his marvellous pluck and endurance. On recovering from the first shock of the surprise that necessarily follows the sudden fall of a singularly vigorous and energetic actor, his friends were less moved with astonishment than by pain at the death which was the natural consequence of his grief for the loss of his eldest son. From that stroke of calamity the man of vehement affections could not rally. With a despondency strangely foreign to the spirit that had hitherto animated him, he told his family that he seemed to be losing his hold on life; and in his intercourse with one or two of his closest associates, the pain that was killing him overcame the old reluctance to admit that he was "hard hit." Just a month before his death he said, in the postscript of a note to a familiar friend, "Yesterday I was too ill to write. Excuse the scrawl. It is an awful thing to suffer from such a shock." It is a mere figure of speech to say that a man dies of a broken heart; but it is a stern fact that men of strong affection do sometimes die of sorrow. The apoplexy that killed Hepworth Dixon last Saturday at his waking hour was the way in which his powers failed suddenly and for ever under the effort of nerving himself to face and endure another day of wretchedness.—*The Athenaeum*.

Since this notice was put in type, Mr. James Barnes, the writer of a volume of plays published in Manchester about twenty years ago, informs us that Mr. Hepworth Dixon's father, after his removal to Manchester, travelled the Newton Heath, Failsworth, and Oldham district, selling note paper, pens, &c. That he was a very intelligent, respectable man, and resided in Little Newton Street, Ancoats, near the present Church of St. James the Less, where Hepworth was born. In a letter to a friend in Manchester two years ago, Mr. H. Dixon said that he was born at No. 22, Newton Street, Ancoats, in a house now pulled down, on land now covered by a church, and that he had recently shown the locality to his eldest son. We think Mr. Dixon was slightly wrong himself in this matter, for No. 22 is still standing, about thirty yards beyond the church. The question is of little moment, except as showing the ability Mr. Dixon had to raise himself from a position so humble to that of editor of the first critical journal in England. Peace to his manes.

BARTON LOCAL BOARD:

A LIVELY SCENE ABOUT THE MINUTES.

LAST week the usual monthly meeting of the members of the above Board was held; the following gentlemen being present: Messrs. H. Leigh, J.P. (chairman); A. Benton, J. Bradburn, J. C. Mather, R. Spary, A. Black, R. M. Cowell, T. Farron, J. Leigh, F. Ermen, Major Waddington, and Mr. G. Trenbath, "our clerk." Upon the clerk proceeding to read the minutes of the last monthly meeting, Mr. Mather (evidently deeming himself the champion of law and order) said: Do you (the chairman) consider that a member has a right to bring forward a motion for the appointment of committees? The Clerk (eyeing Mr. Mather sternly): You are out of order altogether—not a part of you, but all-to-gether, do you hear? Mr. Mather (to the chairman, and evidently disdaining to notice the clerk): It is not a question of their accuracy; and surely, sir, without any suggestion from the clerk, you are quite capable of conducting your business; if not, please let me do it for you. (Cries of "Oh, oh!" and "Silence, owd leather-yed!") The Chairman: We had better have all the minutes read. Mr. Mather (shaking his fist in the direction of the triumphant clerk, who stood grinning—actually grinning at the great Mr. M.): But surely a member has a right to ask a question without being interfered with by the clerk? The Clerk (severely, as became one who felt that he had a noble duty to perform, and was determined to do it at all cost): The Board has bye-laws directing how its business is to be conducted, and it is not proper for any member—even though that member be Mr. Mather himself (!)—without the special permission of the Board. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers from the occupants of the chairs at the lower end of the room.) Mr. Mather (beginning to weep hysterically): I should think you (the chairman) are quite capable of conducting your own business, and (stamping his right foot heavily upon the floor) I won't be put down by the clerk. [Here a general scene of disorder commenced, in which each member sided, as a matter of course, with the person or party he deemed just.] The Clerk (presenting a woful-looking aspect): Mr. Mather has tried that on before. Mr. Mather: Mr. Chairman, I shall feel obliged if you will keep him in order. The Clerk (ringing the office bell): Let us have half-a-dozen bye-laws brought in in order that Mr. Mather may study their contents. But Mr. Mather, appearing to dislike the idea of being enlightened, rushed out of the room, and was heard to say that he thought he had got amongst "a lot of humbugs."

THE GRANBY ROW POLICEMAN.

A BALLAD.

IT was on a Sunday morning,
As to church I chanced to go,
I saw a man stand by himself,
Yet standing in a row.
You could tell, e'en at a distance,
He was one of the police,
For he wore a warlike helmet,
And his clothes were of a piece.
He stood alone where Granby Row
Just crosses Sackville Street,
And I thought he was contemplating
A street row where they meet.
And with consequential languor,
And authoritative gaze,
Was keeping them in order,
While they crossed each other's ways.
I thought so, in that angle
Having seen him oft before,
Like an idle angler with his rod
Upon a tideless shore.
For no stream of people ever passed
From which to make a catch,
And the houses were all warehouses,
And didn't need a watch.
I said, because his melancholy
Looks I did not like,
"Pray tell me are you off your beat,
Or are you on a strike?"
"Each Sunday morn and Sunday eve
I always see you there,

ARONSBURG'S "PERFECTION" SPECTACLES ONLY TO BE HAD AT 12, VICTORIA STREET, AND 103, MARKET STREET, MANCHESTER.

And though four corners you frequent
You don't seem on the square.

"Has your faithless love forsaken you
And left you by yourself?
Have you finished your cook's voyages
And been put upon the shelf?

"Has your wife been aggravating you
With sharp domestic goads?
And, escaping home vexations,
Have you chosen the cross roads?

"Have they put you in a corner
For some naughty thing you've done?
From some fighting in the other street
For shelter have you run?

"Despising plain civilians
Do you take this haughty plan;
For though a mill you run from,
You're a military man!

"Are you sorrowing for your softness,
And projecting something coarse?
Are you grieving o'er your weakness,
Though belonging to the force?

"Are your brooding o'er the vanity
Of earthly things below?
Are you standing still because you find
Your little job 'no go'?

"There's a church a little further on,
You may reach it in a trice,
Where the parson preaches warm enough
To melt e'en the Pol-ice.

They'll welcome you, for, as you know,
Their numbers are but few,
And you would be another man
When sitting in a pew."

Said he, "Though loose, we're in a fix—
The truth if you would learn—
And I'm put here to show that we
Don't know which way to turn.

"'Tis hard I should be pining,
Like a cat without a mouse,
'Tis hard to be a cornerman
Without a corner house!

"I'd fly away and sing a hymn
If I could leave this perch,
But I have taken orders
Not to go into the church!

"Here, week by week, to pass my days,
I'm doomed by cruel fate,
A Peri of policemen,
At Paradise's gate!"

SHAKSPERIANA.

AN ARCHBISHOP'S SERMON ON THE POET.

IN a volume of sermons by the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. R. Chenevix, appears that which he preached at Stratford-upon-Avon, on the occasion of the tercentenary festival of Shakspeare's birth. He begun with a recognition of the moral influence of literature; dealt with the healthiness of Shakspeare's tone, the purity of his general dialogue and of his conceptions of character, the fairness which he shows to all orders of men; but it only touched these and passed on to dwell emphatically on the poet's recognition of a Righteous Judge, and his consciousness of a God and Saviour. The following is a passage on the first subject—the Moral Idea, which, in Shakspeare, holds the place of the obtruded moral purpose, and the vulgar poetical justice, of meaner writers:—

"If we would recognise these footsteps of God in the world, this Nemesis of life, which he is so careful to trace, we must watch his slightest hints, for in them lies oftentimes the key to, and the explanation of, all. In this, if I may say it with reverence, he often reminds us of Scripture, and, indeed, will repay almost any amount of patient and accurate study which may be bestowed upon him. Let me illustrate what I say. They are but a few idle words dropt at random, which, in the opening scene of *King Lear*, make only too evident that Gloucester had never looked back

with serious displeasure at the sin of his youth, standing embodied, as it does, before him in the person of his bastard son; that he still regarded it with complacency, rolled it as a sweet morsel under his tongue. This son, his whole being corroded, poisoned, turned to gall and bitterness, by the ever present consciousness of the cleaving stain of his birth, is made the instrument to undo him, or rather to bring him through bitterest agonies, through the wreck and ruin of his whole worldly felicity, to a final repentance. Indeed, for once, Shakspeare himself points the moral in those words, so often quoted, but not oftener than they deserve:—

'The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us.'

But for this once that he points the moral of a life, a hundred times he leaves us to point it; as, indeed, is almost always the manner in that Book of books, which, like Joseph's kingly sheaf, stands up in the midst of the field, that so even the chiefest among the others may do homage to it."

The conclusion of the sermon brings out the Christianity, underlying his writings, as it underlies the common human life, which they reproduce and idealise:—

"For myself, I am strong to believe that from one so gentle, so tender, so just, so true, as was Shakspeare, the grace to make this highest consecration was not withheld; that we have a right to number him with Dante, with Spenser, with Milton, and that august company of poets

"Who sing, and singing in their glory move."

His intimate, in some sense his profound, acquaintance with Scripture no one can deny, or the strong grasp which he had of its central truths. He knew the deep corruption of our fallen nature, the desperate wickedness of the heart of man; or else he would never have put into the mouth of a prince of stainless life such a confession as this:—"I am myself indifferent honest, but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me, . . . with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in." He has set forth the scheme of our redemption in words as lovely and as exquisite as have ever flowed from the lips of uninspired man:—

'Why, all the souls that were, were forfeit once,
And He that might the vantage best have took
Found out the remedy.'

He has put home to the holiest here their need of an infinite forgiveness from Him who requires truth in the inward parts:—

'How would you be,
If He which is the top of judgment, should
But judge you as you are?'

He was one who was well aware what a stewardship was his own in those marvellous gifts which had been entrusted to him, for he has himself told us—

'Heaven does with us as we with torches do,
Not light them for themselves; for if our virtues
Do not go forth of us, 'twere all alike
As if we had them not.'

And again he has told us that

'Spirits are not finely touched
But for fine issues;'

assuredly not ignorant how finely his own had been touched, and what would be demanded from him in return. He was one who certainly knew that there is none so wise that he can 'circumvent God;' and that for a man, whether he be called early or late,

'Ripeness is all.'

Who shall persuade us that he abode outside of that holy temple of our faith, whereof he has uttered such glorious things, admiring its beauty, but not himself entering to worship there? One so real, so truthful, as all which we learn about Shakspeare declares him to have been, assuredly fell in with no idle form of words, when in that last testament which he dictated so shortly before his death he first of all, and above all, commended his soul to God his Creator; and this (I quote his express words), 'hoping and assuredly believing through the only merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour to be made partaker of life everlasting.'

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Articles intended for insertion must be addressed to the Editor of the *City Jackdaw* 51, Spear Street, Manchester, and must bear the name and address of the sender. The Editor does not engage to return MS. unless a stamped envelope be enclosed, nor will he be responsible for their loss, as our waste-paper basket is a large one, and is consigned to the P.D. several times *per diem*. Neither can we undertake to pay for contributions unless by special arrangement.

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"Yours gratefully,

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